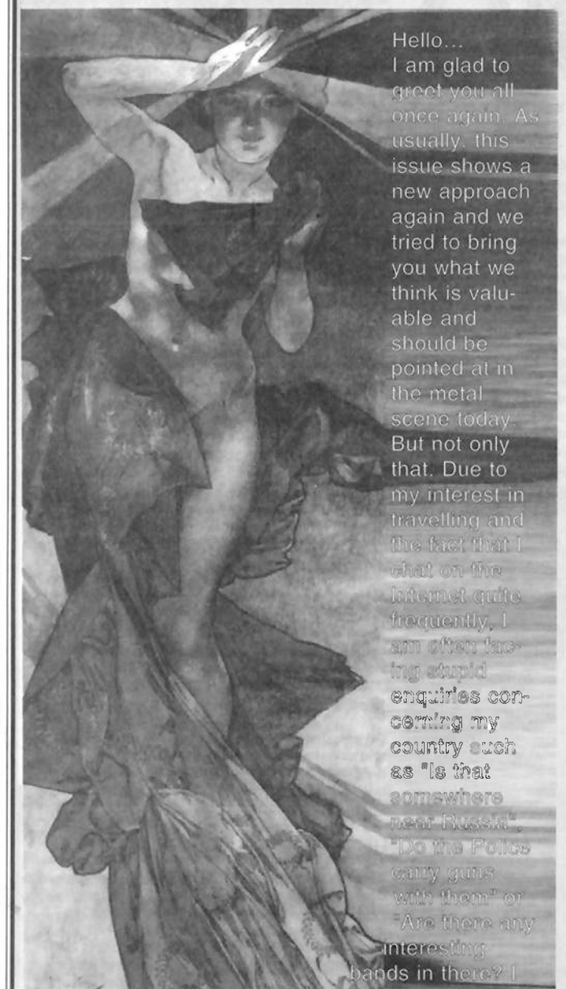
SILENCE diary

autumn '98

a guide to the metal scene



Hello...
I am glad to greet you all once again. As usually, this issue shows a new approach again and we tried to bring you what we think is valuable and should be pointed at in the metal scene today. But not only that. Due to my interest in travelling and the fact that I chat on the Internet quite frequently, I am often having stupid enquiries concerning my country such as "Is that somewhere near Russia" "Do the Poles carry guns with them" or "Are there any interesting bands in there? I guess not..." Therefore I decided to put more emphasis on the Czech republic in SILENCE diary from now on. I do not wish you to be bored, nor do I wish to favour Czech bands in any way - quality still plays the most important part in picking bands. I will only include a bit of what I think the Czech spirit gave the world, this time it is a brief memoir of Alfons Mucha, whose beautiful posters decorate some of these pages.
I have gradually come to the conclusion that what matters is what people do not what they say, so do not expect any clever proclamations from me here. I just hope you find our magazine interesting this time and that is what you should find out now, so read on...

-Marek-

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Please tell me what you think is essential to know about your band...

We were formed around late 95 after I ended my partnership with an Atlanta Based band called Lestregus Nosferatus. Myself and Drummer Tony Laureano recorded our first MCD entitled Mansions Of Eternity in Morrisound Studios and Scott Burns Mixed it. After the completion of that I relocated to Maryland and began writing the next CD. Mid way through completion I was joined by bassist Jay Eckert and We recruited Derik Roddy for the drums because the last drummer was very busy with other projects. We then Recorded the CD Praise the Archaic Lights Embrace at Sound Lab studios. And that is somewhat where we are at now just promoting that release and writing for our next one as well.

I was trying to find out what Aurora Borealis means and I was taken into some scientific territories. Please tell me exactly what A.B. stands for and why have you chosen the name...

There is a long Scientific explanation for it as you have stated but to put it simply it translates to Northern Lights. They are the lights that shoot across the sky in many parts of the world but most noticably in Alaska for the Untied States. I chose the name because I thought it was good representation of our music, the lights are very beutiful and chaotic at the same time and to me our music is somewhat the same.

Well, I was a bit surprised at your new CD "Praise the archaic lights embrace" as what I usually receive from America is mostly brutal death metal with nothing in it but brutality. You seem to combine aggression of thrash or let me say death metal with black metal like vocals, which is quite clever I should say. Do you agree with the way I described your music?

I think you are right to an extent. That is one of the better ways I have heard it described. We do combine all the elements you have listed. I am very influenced by a lot of different styles of music.

Your lyrics deal with topics which are again pretty unusual for American bands... ancient kingdoms and stuff... where have all the bloody guts gone?

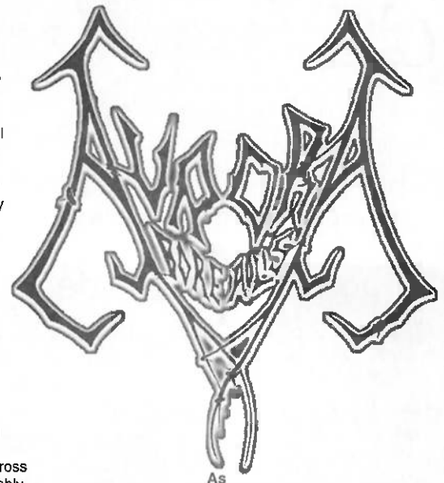
well, I dont know where they have gone put you will not find them here, unless it pertains to a period in history in which I write about. For example on the new CD there is a song about the Shang Dynasty and many were sacraficed to him in his tomb or death chamber so to tell the story of it accurately we describe the killing to the best of our abiltiy. The whole song is not based around that but it is an important part of the song.

Well, having blackened the American way of feeling music, I have to say I find pleasure in brutality as well if it is well done. Can you give me your opinions to brutal death metal bands from America? Are there any bands you like?

As far as the typical brutal American Style, I dont find to much enjoyment in that kind of stuff. I am into a more Europeon sound . Thats not to say that American bands suck because some of the best and first bands to do death metal are from the states. There has to be something added to the music other than just being Brutal. As far as bands I like I listen to a lot of Vader, Autumn Leaves, Abtaze My Sorrow, Dark Funeral, Old Sentenced, and Morbid Angel. There are really to many to name but thats just a few. I realize all of those are not from the US except Morbid Angel but that's the first things I could think of, I told you its Usually Europeon stuff.

Tell me where exactly in America you come from... What are the living conditions for a band, I mean, can you afford to buy instruments easily or do you have to slave away to support your band?

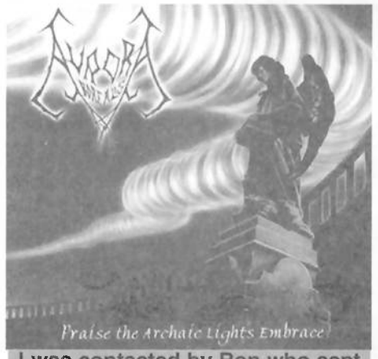
I am from Maryland, Thats near the Eastern Coast of the US. As far as money goes as long as you have a descent job and are not a lazy ass you can buy things fairly easy, but they are still pretty expensive. That is unless you have a big family to support.



As

far as I know, you have released your CD's yourself... haven't you? Was it very costly for you? Please tell me more about your previous material and why the hell you haven't signed for any company so far? The music is definitely worth it...

I think the music is Totally worth it as well, Thats why I have not signed yet. All the offers have been really mediocre. I want a label that will back us one hundred percent. If they cannot pay for recording and the release of the CD as well as promotion, then I dont really need them. I can do all those things myself so if they cannot equal that they are not worth it. It was very costly doing the CDs myself I put up all the cash



I was contacted by Ron who sent me a copy of his band's new CD. I enjoyed the CD very much (see the review section) and I decided to give Aurora Borealis a chance to appear in SILENCE diary, for they surely deserve it. The interview was done via e-mail.

for everything including recording promotion and releasing and they are not shitty. They are just as pro as anything that is released on any label and most of the time better. I am confident that it will pay off in the long run.

The immense growth of the Internet web seems to be unstoppable. As I saw your web site, you keep up with the recent trend as well as many bands do, who wouldn't like to be on the internet today after all... But do you think it will develop in such a way that magazines like my magazine will be gradually completely replaced by web 'zines?

I think the net grows more every day. There is always a new net zine popping up. I have seen many zines switch from printed to net style zines. I tend to like the printed zines much better, but sometimes its cool to just surf from all the different zines on the net. I think anyband if given the oppurtunity should utilize the net because it had gotten us a very large response and many sales as well.

There are various religious groups of fanatics in America as well as some U.F.O. witnesses and enthusiasts. Do you personally believe in U.F.O.'s and would you admit the aliens doing tests on people and so on? By the way, give me your opinion to the organisation called Spread the Word if you know what I mean...

I really dont know what I believe regarding that topic, I guess anythings possible, so I will not rule it out. I have never seen anything like that, but if I do then maybe my views will change. Im not exactly sure what spread the word is, unless you mean that sticker thing going on in the underground, but I dont have a clue what all that is about.

You have surely heard about many people from the former soviet union countries coming to America to find a job. Do you mind it? Have you met any or have you had any problems with such people?

.Actually believe it or not when I lived in Atlanta I worked with 4 soviets who came here for work. They ranged in age from 30 to literally 68. All of them were really cool except one his name was surgei or something like that, he was a total ass hole and was eventually fired. I dont mind it really, but I guess we couldnt let everyone in this country other wise it would be over crowded and turn poverished. There are many Mexican imigrants that come here daily and in California there are more mexican than Americans. That is getting a bit ridiculous. But if they can make it past our Border control then more power to them.

Do American people proud themselves for being American as some people in Europe do?

Of course they do.

A topic related to this is racism... Why do you think such feelings still remain in some people's minds? I mean, we are supposed to have been an intelligent civilisation for a long time and yet there are people who will mistreat other people or look down on them just because they are of a different origin...

I have no idea why some people are racist as long as no one is hurting anyone else, who cares what color they are. I think people should be judged as being good or bad or whatever, but as far as black, white etc. who cares.

Do you divide bands to the underground ones and commercial ones? If so, where do you think the boarder is? Do you still believe there is the underground scene or those are just people who are not good enough to be noticed?

I dont divide bands personally but many people do. There is no line in my eyes, unless a band changes there sound to accomadate the record label or people because they know it will sell more. If the band wants to change then go right ahead but dont do it for someone elses concern. The underground has many very talented bands and most of the time it is the untalented ones that seem to be signed to labels. Some of the best writers and technical players are unsigned.

Now the time has come to talk about your band. So far it has been only quality products from Aurora Borealis. What should we expect in the future?

There is much more to expect we are doing a song on a comp CD for Dwell records which should be out in the near future and are also working on material for our third CD. And also we have just got new Full Color shirts that are very high quality. We will be around for a very long while.

Anything you wish to add...

yes just thanx for the great interview. We really appreciate the chance to be heard in your zine. Anyone curious about merchandise of just general info should contact us at PO Box 1327 Clinton MD 20735-5327

interview by Marek

Cryptic Carnage

I hope you have already noticed this band from Germany, which is one of the East German bands that manage to create something of interest. If not, read on what Alex told me in this short phone interview...

How would you categorise your own musical style?

You can't describe this music, it is a mixture between metal and gothic metal, you must hear it to be able to describe it.

Why have you decided to play this style?

You don't decide to play any particular style, you play and it comes automatically.

Tell us something about your new CD...

The songs retell the story about a lord who lived in this area about 800 years ago and the story in detail is about him coming at springtime for hunting and he has a kind of castle governor who cares for the castle when he is not there. This governor has a pretty looking daughter, which is still unmarried, but promised to another guy, farmer. But the lord desired the girl and she refused to marry him. He went so angry that he decided to kill her. He killed the guy she wanted to marry and he immured her in the fortress. People still say she is a ghost in the fortress.

Why have you chosen this topic?

Just because it is a famous story here and it is a symbol of this town, Rozelowe.

I would say it is rather a tragic story, do you think this kind of stories fit into your music? Could you imagine your band singing about wars and ancient tribes and things like that?

We can, we can do an album about war if it is possible to put in sound.

According to the biography, there was a computer used during the recording. To which extent was it used?

I am not quite sure what you mean, but background noises and sounds were arranged by me and put inside that.

I wanted to ask especially about the last song, about the outroduction part. I heard some car crash and alarm. Was it used on purpose or did a car crash on the street during the recording?

It was meant to get people who listened to the story back to the present. There was that connection that the fortress is still standing, but there are these noises around it, you know.

And was it just taken on a street?

Yeah, it is a real noise. It's quite original.

It is indeed. There were some members of Crematory present during the recording, what did they help you with?

We have known the guys for a long time and they make their CD's at the same studio. The singer of Crematory is in one of the songs and the guitar player played there.

So they are not members, it was just a help. About the studio now, were you satisfied with the studio and what is the cost per an hour, just out of curiosity...

We are not talking about the concrete amount of money. It is an expensive studio, but anyway, we got a good price. There was not enough time, we would have liked to stay longer.

About Last Episode now... Are you satisfied with them and how did you get in touch with them?

We are quite satisfied. We just sent a demo tape there and right after that we got a contract.

I see. I wanted to ask about the album cover. Why is the picture on the promo CD different from the final version?

Just because it was published before the CD and there the cover was not finished yet.

And who painted the picture?

The drummer, Steffan.

And I also think the first album cover was great, where does it come from?

Just a friend of me.

And don't you think pictures of Last Episode bands look all the same nowadays?

So, they look more or less the same, but ours is different, it is brighter.

Can I ask you about your favourite German bands?

Rammstain, we do not only listen to heavy metal.

Do you know Antichrisis or Die Apokalyptischen Reiter...

Just by name...

Never mind... What do you think of religion, are there any religious topics included in your lyrics?

We are all atheists and nothing like that is included in our lyrics. We are far away from any religious stuff.

I have seen the band playing live in Bischofswerda or how the city is called and I have noticed you use fire. Why, I do not think you are a black metal band...

I agree we are not directly a black metal band, but just to get the attention of people, but we often use light show and stage effects, once we even had ivy on the stage and it looked great.

What about the Samael influence I think you have in one song... maybe in "Beauty at every time"...

Samal is one of my favourite bands, I do not intend to copy they, I am just influenced by them a bit.

What about the band's plans for the future...

For this year our plan is just to make a tour in Germany and even in Europe if it is possible. We are trying to manage to work on our next CD...

interview by Marek

COMPETITION!

Thanks to generosity of the labels and people who supply us with promo material we have some CD's and demos to give away. By answering these three simple questions correctly, stating your favourite kind of music and posting this information to us you may win yourself a nice prize. The winners will be many so do not hesitate to write. Since it is the very first time we run a competition of this sort, we made it really simple...

1) Which German band created the fabulous opus "A Wintersunset"?

2) An Israeli band who had their enchanting debut CD "Archives of an Enchanted philosophy" released through Hammerheart productions.

3) What is the name of a Czech band responsible for the everlasting masterpiece called "Thots"?

Please send your answers until January 1999 to my address (see the back page)

-Marek-

Swedish Anata is here to bring back the brutality which always ruled their land... Shalin answers my e-mail questions.

Greetings to thee Schalin, first of all I would like to ask you how did you spend this summer? Did you travel over Sweden or did you spend your free time in the south let's say in Italy or Greece?

Well, I started my holidays with a two weeks trip to Mallorca with my girlfriend. The weather was excellent and we had a really good time. The week after we arrived from our vacation I started working at a Swedish clothing mail order company, and did that for seven weeks. Now I'm back at school, I'm a university student y'know.

I assume that Anata's name is not sufficiently known as for example Marduk or Dark tranquillity but I think everything should change soon. Please attempt to tell very briefly who are Anata and what can they offer by potential customers...

ANATA is a death metal band that was formed in Varberg in 1993. The only original members still left in the band are me on guitar and vocals, and Robert Petersson on drums. The other two members are Henrik Drake (bass) and Andreas Allenmark (guitar). They joined in -96 and -97. Our debut album called "The Infernal Depths of Hatred" is about to be released. The promo got 6/6 and was entitled "album of the month" in the most important metal magazine in France. But like all bands we've made demos too, released in -95 and -97. Two years ago we also did a two song recording for Nuclear Blast, since they would like to hear some more songs, trying to decide whether to sign us or not. But as you can guess, they didn't and the recording was never released. It sucks anyway.

The music style of Anata reminds me a little bit of Gothenburg bands but the creation of yours is more brutal compared to others and especially convincing. Do you agree with my comment? Why did you decide to play this sort of aggressive music?

The music just evolved to what it is today, and we still change. I guess the demo you have is a little Gothenburgish, but it is more aggresive. The reason that we play what we do, is that we write the music we'd like to hear ourselves. There isn't really any other bands that I've heard that sounds like we do. But you should be clear about that we're moving into an essentially more brutal style. This means a reduction of the melodic elements. We are mostly inspired by the original US style.

The second demo Vast lands of my infernal dominion which I possess is a bit old by now but nevertheless I suppose it has still something to say in this overwhelmed scene. Please tell me how the reactions in Scandinavia and rest in the world have been so far and if you may tell me how many pieces have you sold by now?

I don't know how many we've sold so far, since we haven't really tried to sell that much. Both demos were made for promotional use, but of course we've sold some tapes too, maybe a few hundreds. Perhaps not that many, I don't know.

The lyrics which are put on the demo seem to me well written although like most of Swedish bands aimed against religion and mainly against Christianity. Tell me why have you chosen this theme? Don't you think this is an obsolete topic and the biggest threat at the moment is islam? I personally think that Islam could be interesting to fight against... don't you think?

Yeah, definitely! Cool question by the way. Well I'd say religious beliefs cause the most damage to te believers themselves. But fundamentalists and extremists use other means to convince people, so that's another thing. One should be quite clear about that you can never convince a believer of any religion that he is wrong. And actually to be honest, since most belivers cause the most harm to themselves it's basically their own problem. So actually, since I am totally anti-religious, I'm not really more disgusted by the Christian belief than any other religion. I'ts just that Sweden is a Christian country, so it was close at hand. But concerning the major threats to humatity I'd agree on that Islamic fundamentalists are a bigger problem than Christian weaklings.

By the way what are your feelings towards Islamic bomb attacks which took place in the world lately? I know this question should be suitable for the American or Israeli band but unfortunately I don't have any... Do you think that Islam envisages a real threat for the mankind? Can you imagine reign of Islam?

I'd prefer Sweden the way it is, belive me. At least here people aren't generally executed if they don't confess to the state religion. Well again, the bomb attacks. As I said you can't change their beliefs, you just have fight them.

I think we ought to leave this topic and avoid any misunderstandings... anyway I wonder how do your parents respond to your band? Are they proud of you? Do they support you in this activity or they say you should rather work hard?

They seem to be quite proud of our achivements, but we also share the same opinions. Which means, that I don't intend to do this the rest of my life, so I might as well do some education before I'm too old. And besides I moved out four years ago so no one decides for me. By the way, at school I do marketing, distribution and economics mostly, and I have planned to start my own label in a few years time. A record label that knows what it's doing, apart from most other labels today. So studying is a good idea, if you know what you wanna do.

Oh I must confess I really admire the original name of the band a lot. To be frank in the Czech republic it is similar to girl's name Aneta I hope I didn't offend you... where was the name discovered? I don't think it comes from Sweden but I guess it sounds more oriental. Correct me if I am wrong...

Well yes, it sounds oriental, doesn't it? It is, but that was unintended. It's actually a short for for something else. And I'm not offended by the other remark, I'm used to it. There is a Swedish name, Anita, so I've heard it all before.

As far as I know Anata has unleashed the full-tenth cd just now. Can you reveal more necessary details and tell us honestly if the music developed compared to previous demos and is there still kept the brutality you had begun?

If you compare it to our previous demos there is a lot more energy on the album. All four songs on the "Vast Lands..." demo are rerecorded, and the rest is four new songs. Two of these are about the same style as heard on your demo, and the other ones are much more brutal. So these two songs indicate more of the direction that we are moving into. This might sound a bit drastic, but it's not. We'll still make a mix between melodies and brutality, but the emphasis well be on the latter. And the production on the album is uncomparable to our previous demos. To be totally honest, I haven't got a single album with a better sound or production. It is totally excellent!

Season of mist- the French label which released the album unfortunately a bit unknown to me. How the conditions were when you were signing with them? Do you think that such a small company will be able to spread your name all over the world?

I hope they will, and we are top priority now. How the conditions were? I don't know exactly what you mean, but we signed for one album and one optional, but it will be at least three albums in total. This week we'll start to record one of the WAR series albums. This means that the release will be a split album with us and Norwegian band Bethzaida. Both bands record two new songs, plus one cover of their own choice, and one cover of the other band. The cover we chose to do is a Morbid Angel song, "Day of suffering". The reason why we decided for SoM was their distribution, royalties, the deal in itself and everything else that's cool.

I almost forgot to ask you how the life is going on in Varberg? Is it a good place to live in? And what about Varberg's metal scene any capable bands, clubs which are worth mentioning?

I don't live in Varberg, I just come here every week to rehearse, and have done so for four years now. Varberg's quite small, no good clubs for metal or anything. Everything you want, you have to fix yourself. Other bands? There are some but they all suck. There are two other bands that make totally copies of the existing Gothenburg sound, but worse. The names of the bands to avoid are "Fatal Embrace" (Candlelight) and Loth Lorian" (Black Mark). It's not personal, but they suck and we rule.

The interview ends and I must ask you do you think that Anata will stand on their feet in five years? Tell me what would you like to accomplish with the music?

Five years? You never know. But what we're trying to accomplish is a change in the scene, for at least Sweden's scene is crap mostly. The death metal bands are moving into heavy metal, and we're by now quite bored with all this black metal. So we have a minor mission; to bring the brutality back. You'll hear that on our debut album, and you'll definitely hear it in the future.

interview by Petr

Abigail

To be honest, you are my first band from Romania, which I have ever interviewed. Please could you tell me something about the Romanian metal scene, which in my point of view has incredibly increased in the last years. Are there any bands, 'zines, which are worth listening?

First of all, we are very glad that you heard about us and you listened to our music. Regarding the Romanian metal scene, I can tell you for sure that the very best bands you can find in the underground, all the other "known" bands playing an old and really boring hard & heavy rock. Almost the only good metal bands around are gathered here under the Bestial Records wings, so Adi can tell you all about that.

Romania the country that was sizeably damaged by the Communism as the Czech republic several years ago but unfortunately your country was annihilated much more than mine. How is it like to live in Romania today? Do you think that the situation has got better since the crash of communism?

That's a sure thing. In the Communist times, you couldn't do nothing, no good music, no shows, no attitude (it was even hard to wear long hear, could you imagine that?). Now, most things are changed. You can buy any album that you want, any guitar you dreamed about. We can have metal music on radio, TV, magazines, and also bands like ours have many opportunities to show up, the only weak point here being the financial matter. (Razvan's Point of view =R: There is only a rock show on the radio but the most played bands are not from Romania; foreign bands almost 95%)

I suppose that most readers know rather the Japanese Abigail than the Romanian one. Don't you think? Didn't you know that this name was used by a band before you? By the way what does your name exactly mean?

At the beginning, we really didn't heard about this band, and when we did, we said: "So fucking what? We can do better than them. We really don't care. Nothing personal, of course". Regarding the meaning of this name, as I think most of people already know that Abigail was, first of all, one of David's wife (see the Holy Bible), also a witch in Salem and after all is a name that is pronouncing almost the same in most of the languages, and it sounds pretty fine, so why not?

The music style of yours can be easily described as "Beautiful Doom Metal" Do you share the same feelings as myself? Why did you decide to play this kind of music when brutality and fast music reigns the world?

What you said is quite right, I can add only some influences from good old heavy metal roots. We are not really into "brutal" stuff you can hear everywhere, we want to be just aggressive with a lot of melodicity in our songs, and that just because we are also some kind of strange listeners; we are listening from classical to Depeche Mode, Massive Attack and Portishead and to only the worthy contemporaneous metal.

Anyway, how do you appreciate today's doom metal scene? Don't you think it passed away some time ago? What is your view upon the present production of pioneers of this style I mean My Dying Bride and Anathema?

As I told you before, we are not consider ourselves a typical doom metal band, we are many times more faster and less brutal, even we thought that the actual style of the bands you mentioned doesn't represent what they were years ago.(R = personally, the guys from Anathema are my friends and as I told them, I like Pink Floyd but I prefere the old Anathema. My Dying Bride is the dark romanticism itself and no more comment.)

They come from the land of vampires and werevolves to snatch your soul, so dive into this e-mail interview...

Romania is mainly known for their Transylvanian mountains which are a huge inspiration for some Nordic bands at the same time they don't know at all where Romania lies or how it looks like... Anyway have you ever visited Vlad´s ruins in Transylvania? I have recently heard that many people were disappointed by this...

First, we want to tell you that Romania is a beautiful country and if you want more details, just came here or watch Atrocity's video "B.L.U.T.". What, the nordic bands just run out of vikings? Leave Vlad Tepes alone, come and sing about the gipsies M.F.

The demo "Sonnets" came out early this year and I don't want to hide my feelings how I love the demo a lot. Could you reveal what reactions in Romania have you got from zines, listeners by now? And have you found any foreign distributors?

We released three demos since 1994, before this EP "Sonnets". All the listeners loved the material and I want to point out that it was 75% financial supported and produced by us.(R = I'd say 80-85%) We wanted to do it in our way, and between other Romanian products, we think that it came out pretty well. (R = but still the biggest sells are on the black metal bands and I wonder why and I wonder untill when. I heard about a romanian 'zine but just that. I said all, I guess.)

Bestial records has taken Abigail under their wings and I have the impression it is the biggest and the most reliable label in Romania. Do you agree? Are you going to cooperate with them in the future again?

R = Bestial Records is the only label in Romania dedicated entirely to the underground bands. The others are the MOB. No it is not the biggest label in Romania but it is for sure the most loved here. Yes, we intend to release an album (full lenght this time).

Just now I would fall away from the music. What is your view upon religion and are there exist any forms of religion which are familiar to you?

As you probably know, we are orthodox. We believe in God, we fear of God. We are not fanatics, just average people even if from time to time I sing in a small church in the chorus. We also know for sure that there's only a God and only a Jesus Christ for all.

To tell the truth I haven't heard anything about the gigs in Romania. Is it easy to find a place for doing gigs and stuff like that? Have you ever done any gigs? With whom would you play if you had any opportunity?

No, it is not easy to play rock in Romania. First of all, there aren't any clubs to play in. So, here in Bucharest, the city capital of Romania, the underground young rock doesn't exist. Secondly, in the whole country are no more than 4-5 festivals a year, sometimes just 3. There are no sponsors, no prizes, no enthousiasm and sadly, no rock attitude. No wonder that all my friends that used to be in rock, are playing techno now. Now, it isn't important with whom we want to play, but personally I wish to go back in time on a Jimi Hendrix concert and die there. (May he rest in peace: 18.09.1970)

I think I will not bother you. Tell me what do you prepare for this year? Can we expect any essential changes in your music?

I don' think there will be major changes in our music. Maybe, who knows. Almost sure is that we are going to use more often clean vocals and the romanian language (only for Romania). We already work on the album, but with those exams we didn't have the time we wanted to have.

Do you want to say any last words for the end?

For the listeners: try this EP of ours and believe it. For you Petr: Try visit us sometimes, we will take you to the Vlad Tepes's castel ruins if you insist to, but I'm telling you: there is noting spectacular to see there, just true history, so don't trust no more nordic bands. For the rest: There is by any chance, a club in your city who will want to invite us for a gig there? (and a band to exchange used strings and guitar riffs?Joke.) Read you all soon. Respectfully, Razvan and Vlad.
e-mail: TGM_HQ@starnets.ro

interview by Petr

Abigail "Sonets" *Bestial records*
First of all I would like to say it's not the Japanese Abigail but the Romanian and they offer really excellent material which I dare to call magnificent doom metal with great parts and dreamy music. Can I add anything else to close this review? Buy it I recommend it!
Contact: Bestial records, Str. Caras nr 8, 1900 Timisoara, Romania
-Petr- 9

Adramelech "Seven" *Repulse recs.*
Despite the album title, there are only five tracks on this MCD, but in my opinion it is good to release these short albums as well, as far as the best songs are chosen... Adramelech are no different here, they still play the brutal death metal they always played, so their lovers should not be afraid. Two of the tracks are live an they only prove of the band's qualities at live performances. (And I saw them live so you can trust me they are powerful...).
-Marek- 6

Aeba "Im Schattenreich..." *Last Episode*
They try to be very evil and trendy, their music ranks among the modern black metal branches with a lot of shrieking and keyboard atmospheres. There are some beautiful parts on the album, but there are also some parts I found stupid. Not a bad album, but I do not think it has anything to say to the international scene.
-Marek- 5

Aeternus "...and so the Night Became" *Hammerheart recs.*
Back again with their second full length CD Norwegian Aeternus bring you their "dark metal" style, which does not differ from the typical Norwegian black metal much. Maybe the vocals are not typical - they are dark, but still human. This album does not bring anything new at all, they just show you how standard black metal is played. Worth mentioning are acoustic guitar parts. Aeternus cannot compete with bands like Limbonic Art or Covenant for instance in terms of musical art, but they still manage to record a good album.
-Marek- 6

Anasarca "Godmashine" *Repulse*
German bands are influenced by the American style of death metal as well and they don't hide it in any way. Anasarca play quite a good variation of this branch of metal and their CD shows a very high performance of musical potencial. Fabulous cover art work by the way!
-Marek- 6

Anathema "Alternative Future e.p." *Peaceville recs.*
Shame on me for not ever having paid enough attention to this band. That is probably why it completely took my breath. Their new material is definitely original, the music is not very extrème, but emotionally it is very strong and full of energy at the same time. A listen to these three compositions with clean passionate vocal will fill you with harmony and a feeling of enthusiasm. No matter it only runs 15 minutes, get it or miss one of the rare jewels.
-Marek- 10

Aurora Borealis "Praise the Archaic Lights Embrace"
A. B. come from the USA and surprisingly enough they play death metal. Hey, I hope you keep on reading now, because otherwise I will cut your head and shit down your throat (to express it the American way)... Yes, they play death metal, but their lyrics talk about different topics than we are used to... ancient kingdoms and so on. They use a black metal vocal and their music is played with stunning intensity... These nine songs will nail you to the cross as you will never get bored with Aurora Borealis.
-Marek- 9

Avenger "Shadows of the Damned" *Breath of Night recs.*
Breath of night records must be totally satisfied with this Czech band, because they try to destroy the Christian morality for good and that is what Avenger are after. Their music can be described as black metal with an old fashioned touch. Hellish sounding melodic guitar is included and hateful vocals in Czech make their sound unique. If you buy this, you will listen to it all time, at least I do.
-Marek- 8

Avulsed "Cybergore" *Repulse recs.*
It is nice to see bands looking for new ways in music, but I am not sure if this is the best way. Avulsed got infested with the stupidest kind of music I can think of, which is obviously rave, techno, acid and all that crap - I am sure you know what I mean. I tried hard to get used to it, but I failed again. On this CD you can observe what happens when you mix up brutal death metal with it - judge for yourselves, not a point from me.
-Marek-

Azathoth "Artless Puppets Show" *Dark Night's Sky prods.*
D.N.S. productions is a new label from Slovakia and Azathoth is one of their first MC releases. The recording sounds rather deep and the simplest and most suitable description I can think of is doom metal. Not only does it have melodic guitars, also violin is included. The final sound lacks energy in my opinion as the music is mostly very emotional and dark. A strange album for the dying ones...
-Marek- 5

Behind the Scenery "Nocturnal Beauty of a Dying Land" *self released*
Do I listen to the new opus by the Dark tranquility or another melodic item from the eternal abyss of Sweden? No that's Behind the Scenery from Germany which decided to follow on in the veins of the famous Scandinavian heroes. Seven intense death metal songs with fast guitar solos can be found on their self released CD. The music is aggressive and sounds pretty good but the originality is what I miss. However the booklet of the cd is very impressive and I would call it the best self made CD I have ever seen.
Contact: Holger Speidel, Eislingerstr. 31, 73037 GP-Holzheim, Germany
-Petr- 7

Benighted Leams "Caliginous Romantic Myth" *Supernal Music*
Alex, the man behind Supernal Music, decided to step out of the crowd and thus his project is a bit different from what we are used to hear. As I was told, the foul sound was achieved deliberately and maybe foul is not the right expression - it sounds original but rather in the positive sense of the word. Drum machine was used besides typical black metal guitars and the strange, strange vocals. Are you looking for new ways in obscure music? Why don't you try this.
-Marek- 3

Benighted Leams "Astral Tenebrion" *Supernal Music*
Here we go again, another original work from this indeed peculiar underground enthusiast. It is weird again, this time with better musicianship and sound quality though. I like this one much more, but still it is too strange to recommend to everybody... Are you prepared to veer into the unusual?
-Marek- 6

Biotech "Pains" *Taga recs.*
Biotech is a Czech band, which used to play technical death grind. Their new MC was professionally recorded but the music seems to have lost its traditional aggression and sudden changes. There were more technical guitars used this time and the overall sound appears to me much more chaotic and a bit thrash core like. Well, maybe it is not that bad, but I used to like their previous material better.
-Marek- 6

Buried Dreams "Beyond Your Mind" *OZ prods.*
A doom metal band from Mexico brings you their 10 songs, which are very close to what I would call perfect. They are melodic, full of energy and good ideas, so you do not get bored even if the album runs 65 minutes. The music is heavily supported by atmospheric keyboards, but metal still has the main importance here. In fact, i am surprised that this album doesn't differ from what I would expect to find in Europe much, no Mexican influences... just quality metal.
-Marek- 8

Callenish Circle "Escape" *Polar Bear recs.*
A Dutch band, often considered to be the greatest surprise in the Dutch scene after the debut album of The Gathering. Their debut CD "A Drift of Empathy" was widely recognised and I guess this mini CD follow up will gain as much attention as the debut did. For those who are still puzzled, I can describe their style as melodic thrash death metal with energy and harmony in it. There are three songs on this mini CD and one atmospheric track and I do not know what else I should say except pushing you to buy it.
-Marek- 8

Centinex "Reborn Through Flames" *Repulse recs.*
I guess the Swedish have it in their blood, after the "Reflections" album Centinex decided to strike again this time on Repulse records and without any drop in power. Fast, melodic and crushing death metal played in the way metal was originally meant to be played - fast, intense and full of energy. The cover version of Kreator's "Under the Guillotine" is no less smashing than the entire album. I can't wait to see them play live.
-Marek- 9

Christ Agony "Trilogy" *Pagan recs.*
I have grown to dislike them with the time, I think Christ Agony lost their glance in the crowd of the new talented ones who appear these days. I do not find their new album as thrilling as I found the older ones, but I guess the problem is somewhere in me. The "Trilogy" album just develops the slow music which could be called dark metal, still the same cross and dying vocals and some new influences, I for example hear Soulsearch (the Austrian ethno metal band) in "Elysium. You first have to be a fan of Christ Agony to enjoy this album.
-Marek- 5

Contains no Holy Additives compilation #1 *Godreah/Unknown territory*
An extreme compilation from England, which was created in order to support the underground scene mainly. The least you can do for it is to go and get it. While the bands included here are 16, I would like to mention Vortice Cremisi, Sanatorium, Garden of Remembrance and Imperial Domain, other bands do not appeal to me. So please at least remember the names and keep an eye out for the Contains no Holy Additives #2, which will come soon. Oh, I forgot to mention the cover artwork done by Crin - it is stunning in colours.
-Marek-

Cradle of Filth "Cruelty and the Beast" *Music for Nations*
I assume that such a band doesn't need any further words. After the best album of theirs "The principle of evil made flesh" which I still consider the most promising they've delivered us a brand new CD and I had been wondering a lot before I put it to my cd player. Honestly this is a damn good record which shows us the typical Cradle's style: crying whores, monumental keyboards and Dani's incredible raven vocal. I suppose there is nothing to add. I admire their opus very much and worshippers of the band will not be surely disappointed.
-Petr- 9

Crimson Midwinter "Random Chaos" *Black mark*
The long awaited album by this Finnish metal heads is out and it accounts eight winter storms with fabulous sound. Needless to say it's great and surely the best album released in Finland this year. Recommended!
-Petr- 9

Cryptic Carnage "Rozelowe" *Last Episode*
When I saw the band playing live in Bischofswerda (Germany) two years ago, they were maybe the weakest band of the day and I could hear a strong influence of the old Samael. This is a follow up of their debut album "A New Kingdom Was Born", which is self produced and is told to have sold 2.000 copies. The music is very mysterious and it is not that easy to sort it with some style. Well structured songs, based on keyboards, include both clean and hateful vocals and beautiful melodies. The Samael touch can be still felt in "The Wizard" song, but it is no harm to this great, dark and original album, which is bound to evoke harmony and energy in you at the same time.
-Marek- 8

D.A.D. "...and Once We Will Get Lost" *Epidemie recs.*
Epidemie recs. specialise in releasing unknown bands mostly from the Czech underground scene. This time they decided for a band much less extreme than usually. D.A.D.'s style is too light to be called metal, but they still keep some influences of thrash metal and doom. The music is melodic and fresh and the songs are catchy. They keep your attention mainly due to the great variety of moods and ideas brought to the music. I have the feeling it comes only on MC.
-Marek- 8

Dead Infection "The Greatest Shits" *Obscene prod.*
Bestial surgeons from Poland are here to shock you with their brand new mini CD, packed with cover versions of famous bands such as Carcass, Napalm Death, Extreme Noise Terror, Agathocles and Bee Gees for example. What I like about this disc is that the songs included are short and catchy and the band have considerably good sense of humour. On the other hand, there are two techno tracks included which I think stupid and intro and outro parts, done by the same guy, where there is some small print or a manual read, a bit strange I think. To say something decisive in the end, grind core blast is what you can expect, and a good product I should say.
-Marek- 7

Deeds of Flesh "Inbreeding the Anthropophagi" *Repulse recs.*
Man, this is sick. I did not believe they would make an even more brutal album than "Trading Pieces" was. It seems they are still inspired by brutal deeds which were carried out on humans and as I said, now that they have a new drummer, their music is faster than it used to be. I would not definitely recommend this album as a present for your grandma, but people into bestial musical styles will praise it.
-Marek- 8

Deinonychus "Ark of Thought" *Supernal Music*
I have read only bad reviews on this CD so far and to be frank, I do not understand why. Perhaps those people don't have any place for emotional music in their death die hard metal or true underground minds. I dig the band's new style of dark and emotional music and the moody lyrical approach. The music is sometimes slow, sometimes fast, but always dark and obscure - it is a Supernal Music's release after all. Those of you who think you are sophisticated and open minded, go and buy this CD.
-Marek- 6

Desekrator "Metal for Demons" *Hammerheart recs.*
Not another alcoholic thrash metal band, please! Do you remember Gehennah or Infernö? Than imagine their music played by this all star project (members of Gorgoroth, Enslaved and Old Funeral) with the vocalist drunk as fuck. The guy is crude, really. It's not funny, it is not evil, it is stupid. Nothing more to say.
-Marek- 2

Desire "Infinity..." *Skyfall recs.*
A highly emotional slow doom metal album of a Portuguese band is what we have here. Their music is really something you can call slow doom metal, a bit original today I would say. The mail growl is full of sorrow and so is the whole album. You are driven into depths of your mind, your pulse gradually slows down and only then is your spirit free to enjoy the bitter atmosphere... Very touching...
-Marek- 7

Dysanchely "Tears" *Leviathan recs.*
The material on this CD of a Slovakian band consists of songs collected from their earlier demos and two new songs. Dysanchely present their death doom metal with girl's vocals and technically advanced music here. The problem with this CD is that the songs are not attractive enough and considering this is a CD, the sound is not excellent either. Well, I know it is too strict from me to give them lousy five points knowing how hadr it is to create something like this, but I am being strict on purpose as I have to bear in mind how strong the competition today is...
-Marek- 5

Empyrium "Songs of Moors and Misty Fields" *Prophecy productions*
I admired their first marvellous opus very much because it offered something excellent at that time and I didn't believe this CD might have been overpowered but it was only my premonition. The new album still runs along the same lines as the previous one but it's more mature and at the same time better. Great choirs, crying guitar solos and I would say that the piano is used here more even the whole structure of the songs seem to be a bit faster compared to the debut by the way. Concerning Marcus' vocal it has improved a lot since the first one and it sounds absolutely magnificent. To cut it short this romantic jewel is a masterpiece and for those who haven't heard it yet I advise you to buy it. I adore it
-Petr- 10

Eternal Autumn "The Storm" *Black diamond records*
Comes from Sweden but doesn't play fast northern metal. What? Yes you're reading right. Do you imagine an old era of melodic speed metal and stuff like that with black metal screaming and crystal clear sound that's basically what this trio play. I don't want to say it sounds bad or so but unfortunately I got bored after 20 minutes of listening and their creation didn't persuad me even though their musician skills are at a high level. I still don't understand why they reached the 7th place in the German Rock hard. Personally nothing new beneath the sun but admirers of the eighties shouldn't miss it. I think.
-Petr- 4

Ethereal Pandemonium "A Winter Solstice Eve" *Dark Night's Sky prods.*
Mystical doom metal with black metal touches is what E. P. play. It is heavily supported by keyboards which create picturesque melodies and female vocal which reminds me of the last time I had sore throat. They should definitely work on their sound more next time and develop their music a bit more, but this is a good promise to the future.
-Marek- 6

Galadriel "The Mirror of Ages" *Unknown Territory*
Once again I have the chance to listen to the Slovak act mysteriously called Galadriel. It's their brand new second album and as I have only overheard the first one, I would say this one is a bit faster and more creative. As for the music, it is sad doom metal with good instrumental work and two vocals. The male one is ok, but I find the female singer's vocal a bit too high pitched and weak. In fact, it is hard for me to think of any Slovak female singer I like, they all seem to have these voices. But on the other hand it does not sound bad at all and you may still find it original.
-Marek- 7

God "From the Moldavian Ecclesiastic Throne" *Bestial records*
It's always gorgeous to receive an original band especially when it comes from Romania. I have the impression that their metal scene has incredibly increased lately and it brings many interesting bands for example Gothic, Negura Bunget a few others and among them God that did convince me and I am honoured to review them. Nine sombre hymns with untraditional music styles are represented here. Of course there are keyboards and even violin used as well. However two awesome vocals make this album more varied. The whole album is very interesting and I would advise to all open minded freaks out there to check it out at once.
-Petr- 8

Gooseflesh "Welcome to Suffer Age" *Goldtrack recs.*
Gooseflesh from Sweden play crossover, which means they are influenced by various styles and it is nearly impossible to pin them down. Good musical potential is maybe the strongest quality of Gooseflesh, on the contrary they suffer from the American syndrome, they use the thrashcore riffing and some sort of hard rock vocals. I leave the final decision up to you, it is not bad, but a bit unusual for me.
-Marek- 7

Gothic "Touch of Eternity" *Bestial records*
Another impressive band hailing from Transylvania. Never heard about them before and I must say that their production enchanted me. The style of Gothic can be described as melodic gothic metal. Sometimes I would compare the vocalist to early Pyogenesis or Cemetery even musician skills are good. A listenable album which should not be overlooked.
-Petr- 7

Gothic Sex "Laments" *Repulse recs.*
G.S. are a well established Spanish band and they produce sweet gothic metal, which means it is a big surprise from Repulse records, as they specialise in releasing mostly less human music. Back to G.S. now. The music is very light, it includes non violent melodic guitars and light female and male vocals. It is mostly mid-paced and it is nice to listen to. Worth mentioning is the multi medial part of the CD, which is done in a very nice way.
-Marek- 6

Handful of Hate "Gliphotic Supremacy" *Northern Darkness recs.*
A shop assistant in the Milano's famous Sound Cave music store told me they were the worst Italian band and a crap as he put it. I do not quite understand why, this CD is full of energy and the fast and melodic black metal songs are likely to get every fan of this style. Quite a smashing album I dare to say...
-Marek- 7

Infamy "The Blood Shall Flow" *Quabalah prods.*
A short trip to Los Angeles with these 4 devils will leave you in pieces. I personally do not like their sound, it seems too unclear to me. I am slowly getting fed up with these bands who do not have any ideas of their own - they just want to be brutal, the most brutal if possible. But it is not as bad as it may seem, it is not boring and especially those who like conventional death metal may be pleased with it.
-Marek- 5

Infanticide "Infanticide" *Tomi recs.*
This is the very last review I am willing to write for this issue and I have to say I am not excited about it at all. The old good Infanticide have turned too modern to my liking on their debut CD and they did some experiments, which would sound nice each separately, but not together like this. They still play death metal as they always played, but just imagine a death metal album with a medieval song, an industrial song, a stupid old death thrash song in Czech and many effects. As I said, I was disappointed, the final atmosphere of the album sounds too modern and artificial to me.
-Marek- 5

Krabathor "Orthodox" *Morbid recs.*
Considering how many years they have been playing already, and that every new album is even more brutal than the previous one, everyone must find them orthodox. Krabathor celebrate world wide success and their feeling of death metal is very close to me.
What you will find here are ten brutal and technical songs full of intense aggression and energy, let alone the typical distorted bass. If you fancy brutal death, they are the band.
-Marek- 8

Lunar Aurora "Seelenfeuer" *Voices productions*
I have not heard their first much appreciated album that some people considered one of the best black metal cds ever done. Believe or not but the second one is a really convincing black metal album which doesn't miss the gloomy atmosphere filled with keyboards and some acoustic parts. All songs are perfectly done and offer an unforgettable experience. As I said the whole CD sounds excellent and I wouldn't hide my feelings how I like the album. Surely one of the best black metal band in Germany.
-Petr- 9

Mental Home "Black Art" *The End recs.*
Do you know what "atmospheric dark doom metal" stands for? Have a listen to this Russian band to find out. The album is full of new ideas and beautiful melodies, be it guitar or keyboard melodies, which open your mind wide and take your soul to dizzy heights. Vocals in "Winter Art" remind me of Tiamat's "Clouds" for a while, but there are more extreme vocals used throughout the album. This album is truly enchanting and it even includes a beautiful CD-Rom track and it comes in 8-panel digipack. Don't be afraid to try something new for a change!
-Marek- 9

Monasterial Crypt "Stári" *Moret prod.*
They come from the Czech republic and this is their third release. For the first time on a label, but still in MC format. The band produce melodic death doom metal music with brutal male growling and gentle girl's recital. I would not say the music is outstanding in any way, but it is decent. The music flows in a gentle pace and it is accompanied with acoustic guitar. If you want to hear Czech lyrics - melancholic poetry, which is the most tempting quality of this band, have a listen to them.
-Marek- 7

Mystic Circle "Drachenblut" *Last Episode*
They belong to those bands whose image I think stupid. In fact, I remember hating the band for it and never wanting to have a listen to them. But hardly had I received this promo, my attitude changed considerably. Yes, their image is stupid, but you simply cannot deny their music. M. Circle play symphonic black metal, supported by mighty keyboard melodies and thoughtful songs, which are intercut with a small intro. The whole album is very strong, although it is nothing new again.
-Marek- 8

Nephenzy "Where Death Becomes Art" *Black diamond records*
Honestly, Eternal Autumn didn't impress me but their colleagues Nephenzy are for me a bit better because they run classic Swedish violent style in the veins of Gates of Ishtar. The whole cd sounds ok but I miss at least a bit of originality. However if you are a worshipper of Swedish melodic death metal and don't look for any originality then you can check them out and by the way I do appreciate their cover picture very much.
-Petr- 6

Pentacle "...rides the Moonstorm" *Damnation 9*
Lovers of old fashioned thrash black metal wake up, because this is something for you. Pentacle awakened the ancient spirit of raw black once again and I think we may call them a death metal influenced band as well. Nine songs of vital and aggressive music. This is definitely a good album, but as I said before, it is mainly for fans of this particular style.
-Marek- 6

Profanum "Profanum Aeternum: Eminence of Satanic Imperial Art" *Pagan records*
On their quest for originality, Polish Profanum decided not to use conventional metal instruments and to replace them with classical ones such as violin and piano. However, drums and black metal shrieking remained so the album does not sound much different from any other atmospheric black metal album. Although the entire CD sounds majestic, the compositions are not as special as the album title may indicate. Don't be afraid though, this is a good purchase.
-Marek- 8

Ruination "Visionary Breed" *Goldtrack recs.*
The "Visionary Breed" album of Lithuania's Ruination is an album which combines a whole lot of influences from heavy metal melodies, doom atmosphere and power metal energy. Vocalist's style varies, as I said before, they are not afraid to look for their own direction. All of the 15 songs (total playing time 54 min.) were recorded at the Abyss studio and produced by Peter Tägtgren, which only proves of the sound and production quality. This really is an album for everybody as the label says, you just have to be a bit open minded.
-Marek- 7

Sarcastic "Anywhere out of the world" *Black Orchid prod.*
A Slovakian death metal band and their first official MC. I am not sure what bands of this kind are up to, but Slovakia is still overcrowded with this kind of not melodic fast death metal with that tin sounding drums. It is a well played boredom.
-Marek- 5

Satarial "The Queen of the Elves' land" *Hobgoblin recs.*
A black metal band from Moscow that surprised me a lot with their melodic medieval folklore influenced brand of black metal. The songs on this tape are melodic, full of energy and very catchy, and although they are not anything unheard, they have their own magic. All songs are sung in Russian and they sound a bit fairy tale like with the keyboards, flute, violin and female soprano. Simply said, I love this tape so you had better get it.
Contact: Satarial, 123423 Levin V., P.O. Box 69, Moscow, Russia
-Marek- 9

Scabbard "Beginning of Extinction"
Scabbard are from my country and they've been playing death metal for many years. I should say I've seen them several times live and their production never excited me. Finally I can listen to their music on the CD and I must say it's far better than to observe them on the gig. Frankly, Scabbard cannot be considered as any original band or so but nevertheless they are able to create quite well played death metal. However if this cd came out a few years ago they would surely become recognised.
-Petr- 6

Septic Flesh "A Fallen Temple" *Holy recs.*
Their label has got it right - monumental indeed. Advisory: don't listen to it while driving a car - I nearly killed myself.
-Marek- 10

Serenade "The 28th Parallel" *Deviation records*
I don't know any band from Scotland and Serenade are my first band from this wonderful country which I'm reviewing. It seems that Serenade creates doom metal with rock parts in the old 70's sound. The whole CD sounds quite good according to me but sometimes it's very hard for me to listen to it until the end, maybe I'm too spoiled. Anyway the lyrics which are put on the album describe voyages of Christoph Columbus and they are worth reading. As far I as know they've just recorded the new one and you can write for more details.
Contact: Fraser Mcgartland, 19 Castlehill Drive, Newton Mearns, Glasgow, G77 5JZ, Scotland
-Petr- 6

Shub Niggurath "The Kinglike Celebration" *OZ Prods.*
Three Mexican devils try to seize your soul by luring you with their obscure thrash death metal production, which, even if not very clear sounding, is full of aggression and has the old metal spirit in it.
-Marek- 6

Silent Stream of Godless Elegy "Behind the Shadows" *Redblack prod./M.A.B. recs.*
One of the most prestigious Czech bands these days. They are here to offer you a mild blend of sweet melodies and heavy music. Yes, it's doom metal, this time also with cello besides violinand with 12 mostly mid paced impressing compositions, with the exception of "Old Women's Dance", which is not only impressing, but it is a hymn as well. This album is destined for lovers of doom metal and I hope you will enjoy the three cover versions of Dead Can Dance and This Mortal Coil.
-Marek- 9

Suidakra "Auld Lang Syne" *Last Episode*
It is hard to call them a black metal band for there are so many folk influences and melodic guitar parts that I think their music boarders with other styles to a great extent. Clean vocals and the accoustic medieval guitar parts will drag you right into a battle somewhere in nowhere a few centuries ago. Tell whatever you will, this is a strong album with its fierce and gentle parts - something to enjoy.
-Marek- 7

Tales of Darknord "Endless Sunfall" *R.I.P. prod.*
T.O.D. hail from Volgograd, Russia, to show you that it is not only America where quality brutal death metal is made. This CD contains 12 songs, five of which are five tracks. As for those, I like them a lot and I also like the brutal sounding Russian speech between these tracks. Although their level of musical performance is high, you have to be a special kind of person to listen to this nearly 60 minute album regularly. Again you can see that the quality dwells everywhere... (I am not speaking about their lyrics now though...)
-Marek- 7

The Ideal Realised Through the Underground Compilation CD *Bloodbath recs.*
This compilation CD includes 10 Japanese outfits which try to persuade you about their qualities. Some of them are successful, some of them are not. I was impressed especially by Cave in Depth and Asrafil as they are a bit experimental. While Nyarlathotheps way of performing J.S.Bach is terrible, he tries to create something original again, but unfortunately it is not very listenable. The other bands rank with brutal death metal and death grind genres and the best for you will be to estimate them yourself.
-Marek-

Thuban "Zeitgeist" *Northern Darkness recs.*
Do you need to relax? Well, I do not so I find this album a little too long. Thuban bring very mystical and dreamy music, which is based on a black metal sound, but most of the time you will hear an accoustic guitar and very gentle plucking of its strings. As usually both screaming and clean vocals are used. Despite my poor description I believe you find this album very original and the music very experimental and persuasive. Recommended for eternal dreamers...
-Marek- 7

Unhallowed demo MCD
I like these demos on CD, it is definitely a good way to start. Unhallowed come from Germany and they play black metal with keyboards and piano. They are pretty influenced by Norway and they should be fined for speeding in some places, which are from time to time replaced with atmospheric parts. They are very powerful too. I bet the "In Darkness Reborn" song will make you bang your head against your local church until it crumbles into pieces. If you still have not had enough of blackness, get Unhallowed.
Contact: Matthias Welsch, Auf der Henschweis, 55494 Rheinböllen, Germany
-Marek- 8

Warhammer "The Winter of Our Discontent" *Voices productions*
Oh I dare to say it's the most boring album I have recently heard. This German act tries to play death/grind/thrash in the veins of eighties but all songs sound the same and bore me to death. I do not get why Voices productions released such an album I think that there are thousand times better bands in Germany which are worth releasing than Warhammer. For me an absolutely non convincing album.
-Petr- 2

DEMO REVIEWS

5.B Hated "Somewhere in Nowhere"
This tape took my breath away, as I would not ever admit that a band can surprise me with some variation of thrash metal. In fact, it is very melodic thrash metal with clean, but aggressive, vocals, with catchy, but not stupid, melodies and good musical potential. They managed to revive the old values of metal, and at the same time came up with their own spirit, combining metal with beautiful melodies. Recommended. I must also mention their genial cover artwork - my courtesy!
Contact: Mario. 't' Erf 22, 5374 AM Schaijk, Holland
-Marek- 9

Amorbital "Invidia"
Again death metal from Slovakia and this time a high-quality product. In fact, it's high time somebody noticed this band, they play death metal in the European way - brutal but not very extreme, melodic, but to a reasonable extent and quite entertaining as well.
Contact: Lubo Stanko, Osloboditelov 18, 066 01 Humenné, Slovakia
-Marek- 8

Anata "Vast Lands of My Infernal Dominion"
I've met with Anata through the Internet and I was enchanted by their page and especially by the original name and I was curious how they could sound. Frankly, their second demo was a great present for me. Fast and well played technical brutal death metal with a fabulous vocal! Do you ask me if there are any influences? Yes but Anata has a lot of own ideas and creates unique music. The tape comes with an excellent production and nice booklet as well. Currently they've recorded a debut CD for the French label Season of mist and I expect from them something amazing!!!
Contact: Schalin, Getteron 7067, SE-432 93 Varberg, Sweden
-Petr- 9

Arthemesia Demo 1998
This Finnish act surprised me a lot. Firstly I thought it would be an uninteresting demo but I was wrong after a while. The band offers on their debut demo three tracks of great melodic black metal with gothic and heavy metal elements. I assume it won't be bad at all if I describe each song. First one called "...My oath, my throne" really catchy and strongly inspired black metal song. The second one is absolutely marvellous, nice keyboards, gloomy vocals as well as the sombre atmosphere and the third song is in the veins of the first one but there are added heavy metal choirs, interesting and at the same time excellent. Unfortunately the sound of the demo didn't turn out well according to me but it doesn't disturb me so much yet the band is worth a listen.
Contact: Blackwind, Turkismiehentie 4 B 12, 00370 Helsinki, Finland
-Petr- 8

Celeste "Nature Dying..."
A drummer of the band was so kind and sent me their debut demo and to tell the truth I had been wondering for a long time where I should put Celeste's music. A mix of death, black, doom and some melancholic parts I would say. Honestly I assume that Celeste have not found their own style but nevertheless the record sounds quite good.
Contact: Hannu Lakervi, Topiaksentie 5, 36240 Kangasala, Finland
-Petr- 6

Crawlspace "The deep..."
A three-member band from Germany addressed me with their earlier material, released on mini CD. It includes four songs of slow and compact death metal, undoubtedly influenced by the legendary Bolt Thrower. Well, it is quite good, but a pinch of originality would not do any harm.
Contact: Crawlspace, Wiesenstr. 7, 63329 Egelsbach, Germany
-Marek- 5

Crawlspace "Down Sick Dead"
On this new recording Crawlspace seem to have improved their technical abilities. The band's music is still as brutal and stinky as before and the Bolt Thrower touch still remains in their music but I think there is more energy and brutality this time. Maybe the mark is not as high as it should be, maybe because I find the band loathsome in some way. I wonder if you get shivers all over when listening to their outro as I do, so brutal that is...
-Marek- 6

Depressive Reality "Walk in the Sunblood Garden"
D. R. come from Prague, the capital of my country and their style is, as usually, too varied to be called doom metal, but who cares anyway. I like this demo mainly because of its clever catchy melodies and deep moods. No matter how shitty their sound is or how bad a singer the singer is, this is the kind of demo you will really listen to. Obviously, due to the above mentioned imperfections, the mark cannot be any higher, but I am sure their next demo may kick.
Contact: Michal Havránek, Vidimská 1/732, 181 00 Praha 8, Czech Republic
-Marek- 6

Dizorderz "Fata! Variations"
So here we have the first official demo of Dizorderz from Prague, who play death metal and tend to repeat one riff forever. Otherwise their music sounds strong and it is enriched with some new ideas, especially vocals sound original to me. But on the other hand, it is not my style at all, so check it out if you are into death metal only and you don't mind the repeating riffs...
Contact: Pavel Gaberle, Sáskova 1802, 148 00 Praha 4, Czech Republic
-Marek- 5

From thy Ashes "One With the Waves"
Would you like some sweet rock metal from Germany? Musically quite good but too commercially aimed - melodies are too sweet and vocals are too light for me. "One..." is a self produced CD with four songs and you can get it from the band.
Contact: Sebastian Schult, Geissberg 13, D-71334 Waiblinger, Germany
-Marek- 4

Gardens of Cry demo 97
An interesting thing about this band seems to be the vocal which reminds me of Megadeath. How to describe their style, let me think, heavy metal with doom moods may be what they try to produce. The five songs are quite entertaining, but still it is just an average release. They should work on their compositions more, just look what Crown of Autumn from Milano create, guys!
Contact: Lorenzo Letizia, Lgo. Casale degli Inglesi N., CAP 00148 Rome, Italy
-Marek- 5

Heaven Grey "Memory River"
Sometimes what leaflet says can be true and the product is worth your money. And that is the case with this Latvian's band demo. The tape includes nine slow and sad songs, which are on a considerably high level. Vocals of Ansis remind me of Cemetary a bit and a cello is used as an accompaniment. I have never heard the language they use in Latvia before, but the way they use it in one of their songs is quite cool. To cut it short, it is a high quality product, let alone its brilliant cover.
Contact not available, sorry.
-Marek- 9

Hypnosia "The Storms"
Are you still missing old days of Kreator or Slayer? Aren't you? Then you should avoid reading the following lines and for those who worship I recommend to check "The storms" demo. Three very aggressive and impact pieces with raw Swedish sound. It is available for 5 dollars and you can also ask for their MCD which is out just now.
Contact: Castervall, Tradv. 30, S-352 53 Vaxjo, Sweden
-Petr- 6

Insepultus "Promotape 98"
Insepultus are a Slovakia based band who started playing classical death metal, which has changed a bit recently, mainly because they included more melodic elements. But still it is not brutal death and it is not melodic death, something between. The sound and music quality is high enough to ensure them a CD. Decide for yourselves, but I am not very excited about that.
Contact: Rado Priputen, Puskinova 20, 083 01 Sabinov, Slovakia
-Marek- 6

Mentally Parasites "Promo 1997"
They do not fit in this magazine musically, but since I got their tape, what else should I do than review it. M.P. combine new Sepultura's thrash sound with typical primitive rhythms of hardcore and the outcome, although it is hard for me to admit it, has more power than most metal bands do. As I am against all closely hardcore related styles, I decided not to rate this tape.
Contact: Ladislav Polák, Bielocerkevská 1, 040 22 Košice, Slovakia
-Marek-

Nebelheim "Promo"
Nebelheim is a project, which seems to have turned into a regular band recently. This is their first product ever and I am glad to say it surprised me. It brings originality into the scene. Well, as it was a drummer who established the project first, it is mostly drums what gives the music its direction, there is keyboard used a lot as well as guitars. Psychadelic vocals combined with a bit Master's Hammer like shrieking in Czech make this quite an interesting recording. No matter how I wish to compare this with some band, it seems to be very difficult, maybe the overall mood can remind of Nomicon. There is an official recording to come soon, so watch out.
Contact: Nebelheim, Skarn, Nerudova 10, 741 01 Novy Jicin, Czech Republic
-Marek- 6

Nightly Gale "The Bleeding Art"
Do you go through depressions? Than N.G. are the right band to help you fix the rope to the tree you are about to hang on. They come from Poland and they produce sorrowful and slow doom metal, which gradually slows your pulse down until you faint and stop breathing completely. The demo includes nine songs with a nice melodic guitar and a clean but sad vocal. Honestly, I think it is dead boring, I don't like this dying stuff. Perhaps some of you do...
Contact: Slawomir Pyrzyk, ul.M. Archaniola 6/1, 41-800 Zabrze, Poland
-Marek- 5

Nyarlathotep "The Ideal - the Truth"
This is rather an experimental project from Japan. A very underground release, it is very weird, I would call it experimental death metal composed with sporadic brain convulsions. The recording is quite bad and I think Makoto should definitely practise with his classical guitar more. Well, although this is not Tyrant - the best Japanese band I know - you are welcome to try it, especially those of you who like strange experiments.
Contact: Makoto Fujishima, 772-1-301 Hayashi, Atsugi Kanagawa, 243 Japan
-Marek- 3

One Last Sin
It is nice to get a promo from N.Y. As for the music, it is death metal and I would say it has some thrash core influences in it. The four songs on this demo are played in a simple way and it seems that the musicians do not even try to flaunt in any way. The main emphasis is put on the heavy rhythm. This may sound great at a live concert, but I think it takes more to be outstanding or even interesting.
Contact: One Last Sin, 37 Weston Ave., Fishkill, NY 12524, USA
-Marek- 4

Overlord "Overland + Promo 98"
This is rather an underground release, because what Overlord play is a sort of death metal with the ancient evil feeling, simple and powerful riffs, screaming solos and extreme vocals. While the old material is more straight forward, the new tracks appear to be more technical and a bit philosophical concerning lyrics. It is nothing special to be honest, but I respect this band and recommend them to all death metal lovers. I'll rate just the new songs as the rest is a bit old.
Contact: Piotr Forystek, Ul. Kosciuszki 4, 38 200 Jasło, Poland
-Marek- 7

Perversist "Flirting With Disaster"
I have noticed some people from America speak highly of the Czech and Slovak death metal scene and one of the mentioned bands were also Perversist. I personally think our death metal scene drowns in unoriginality. It probably depends what you are looking for. In case you are a brutal death metal enthusiast, you will most possibly get what you are after. Otherwise you will find them another decent band among millions. A mixature of death and grind, smashing riffs and the usual stuff.
Contact: Roman Týgl, Krále Jiřího 29, 360 01 Karlovy Vary, Czech Republic
-Marek- 6

Quiet Flower "Inside Me, Inside You"
Romantic death'n'roll, the way Quiet Flower describe their music, sounds more interesting than the music itself. In fact, their music combines more influences, ranking from thrash and heavy metal to doom and the already mentioned death. In my opinion they should work on their songs more in order to make them a bit more catchy and attractive. Nevertheless the demo is not that bad.
Contact: Gabriele Oltracqua, Via Borgatta 7, 150 60 Castelletto D'Orba (AL). Italy
-Marek- 5

Sad Harmony "Astray"
"Astray" is a second demo of this Czech band who play melodic music on the boundary between rock and metal. The vocalist's voice is very passionate and he seems to have found his own face. The music seems quite developed to me technically speaking, maybe the melodic guitar can remind you of Sentenced's style a bit in some places. There are some touching moments in the recording which will squeeze your heart like a toothpaste. Anyway, it kicks and it is definitely worth your money so if you would like to try something else for a change, send your lousy 4$ and order this professionally made tape.
Contact: Morphia prods, Zdenek Neusar, Sokolská 1213, 696 81 Bzenec, Czech Republic
-Marek- 8

Seminarium "Salva Imperator Hades"
Hey, this is not bad, a death metal horde from Poland with lyrics in Polish language. The tape I received looks terrible and so does the cover, but the music makes up for it. As I said, it is death metal music and there are places where black metal like atmosphere is likely to be found, deep emotional atmosphere that is. And I also have to mention the atmosphere in some places reminds me of the legendary Czech black metal heroes Root's early albums, although I doubt they might know them. But the music is much faster in general and I like the way it is played. It is not a bad demo at all, but I am not sure if this is enough to gain a deal...
Contact: Marcin Domanski, ul. Ostrowiecka 30/36, 21-300 Radzyn Podlaski, Poland
-Marek- 6

Sorrow Bequest "Torn from the Last"
Would you believe that? A melodic death metal band from the U.S.A. And a good one to be exact. Heavy metal influences are inevitable in guitar melodies and obviously the band can be simply compared with many Swedish bands. Although 5 songs are not many, I suggest that you support them by getting this brilliant demo.
Contact: 342 W. Juniper Ave, Wake Forest NC, 27587 USA
-Marek- 7

Suicide Machine "Mechanic Future"
A Czech band who like uncontrolled thrashing chaos and call it music. Distorted vocals are used and there are some psychadelic Slayer like guitar parts included. This kind of noise does not impress me much on whole, although technically it is good, in my opinion they lack originality as well.
Contact: Tomas Krumphole. Skolni 267, 294 29 Bozno, Czech Republic
-Marek- 4

Tears of Euphony Promo CD 98
T.O.E. come from Denmark and what they produce can be called technical death metal. As probably it is with most technical bands, T.O.E.'s music is a bit chaotic, but not hard to get used to. They use fresh ideas in music and create atmospheres you have not experienced before. If you like to explore, try it out, I am not sure if they sell the CD, but you can always ask.
Contact: T.O.Euphony, Klplev Nygade 5, 6200 Aabenraa, Denmark
-Marek- 7

The Meads of Asphodel "The Bemoaning of Metatron"
An extraordinary two-devil black metal project from the ancient England. The music seems to be a nonsense variation of black metal, but it rather makes fun of it and at the same time brings a new approach to the mystical atmosphere. For instance, a part of "The Book of Dreams" song is a pure circus music, which fits perfectly and has the mentioned extraordinary message. Even if you do not take the music seriously, it evokes strange powers in you and you completely fall for it. Musically innovative, spiritually degrading, mentally soothing.
Contact: (Through Godreah 'zine) 33 Lilac Road, Haddesdon, Herts, EN11 0PG, England
-Marek- 8

Throneaeon "Carnage"
Damn good! I said when I had listened to the demo. This combo astonished me not originality but the sort of music they are playing. What do you expect from them? Black or Gothenburg style? You are wrong Throneaeon play pure satanic death metal the way it was meant to be. Killer production, fast guitar solos, blasphemo lyrics towards god sometimes I wondered if I didn't hear some songs from Deicide but I recognized that. Death metal lives and here is a proof.
Contact: Tony Freed, Lantvarmsgatan 9, SE-724 60 Vasteras, Sweden
-Petr- 8

Undead "Night Scream"
Undead will take you, say, 10 years back in time, when thrash metal ruled the scene. Undead also use clean vocals. Unfortunately another aspect of the era back then was that songs were not very complicated. Hey, but who cares, if you like the style, get it.
Contact: Santori Andreas, Via D. Stiepovich 258. 00121 Ostia Lido (Rome), Italy
-Marek- 7

Uranus "The Clang of Lances"
Vow I'm glad I got this tape as the music which is put on this demo seems to me conspicuous and especially original. Frankly I haven't heard about them before I received it. Really Uranus has its own identity and plays rather untraditional music where different metal styles are connected. I would say the whole atmosphere of the demo reminds me a little bit of Septic Flesh but Uranus is more obscure. Sometimes there can be found nice female vocals which perfectly fit into the songs as well as the keyboards. Well done! I am flattered... I'm looking forward to hearing their upcoming releases!!!
Contact: Uranus, PR 15601, Papagos, Athens, Greece
-Petr- 8

Venusian Death Cell "Natural Harmony"
What a cute tape from Ireland, it reminds me of the time when I was 10 and together with my friends we tried to record a demo. But we were more successful than David is, it was at least funny (this is not). Imagine a composition with one snare drum, sick reciting and occasional distorted guitar blows. Drop a line to David before he does something stupid for I am sure he needs your psychical help. I got two more tapes from V.D.Cell, but those were even worse. No points.
Contact: David Vora, 29 Whitechurch Hill, Ballyboden, Dublin 16, Ireland
-Marek-

Verum "Fuersturm"
Industrial meets thrash metal once again, this time in Germany. The song structure is not very complicated here, if you imagine an average thrash metal album and replace all instruments except guitars with electronic ones, you will get what Verum produce. I know this is supposed to be powerful and striking, but sadly enough it is not. As I said, average.
Contact: Michael Kirchner, Veilchenweg 5, 50999 Köln, Germany
-Marek- 5

Amour In Dark Ground #1
The 'zine comes from Malaysia and the editor's enthusiasm for what he does is stronger than his English. Let us hope he will get better in the future. This issue is photocopied on 80 A4 pages and it includes interviews with Aurora Borealis, A Mind Confused and Kampfar among others and there are some tour shoots from an occult encyclopedia included, which I found very interesting. A couple of rather exotic scene reports are inside as well and despite some defects, I consider this 'zine worth your attention.
Contact: Hasrol Harith (A.C.), 2 Lorong 12, Tmn Peruda, 08000 Sg. Petani, Kedah, North Malaysia
-Marek-

Dark Hole #1
This is a brand new 'zine from Lithuania. Format A5 26 pages very well Xeroxed and with great computer layout sometimes I have the feeling that the editor of the 'zine used too many effects and it doesn't fit at all but never mind. There are several shorter interviews with Blood of Christ, Aeternus, Overlord, Imperial Foeticide and others as well as reviews and articles about The moaning and Allegiance. The 'zine is available for 2 American dollars world wide and the second one is out when you read this.
Contact: Dalnius Burauskas, Draugystes 3-38, 5150 Joniskis, Lithuania
-Petr-

Dark Moon #5
The fifth issue of this Finnish magazine came out lately. 44 A4 pages with interesting interviews for instance Acheron, Funeral Rites, Unholy, Night Conquers Day, Flauros a few others. There are also included some reviews on CD's and 'zines. The lay-out is in my opinion very simple but it doesn't annoy me so much. The price for this effort is 5$. Anyway the editor of the 'zine has set up a label under the same name as the 'zine and released the debut MCD of Withered Garden and you can obtain this piece on this address as well.
Contact: c/o Tommi Hakonen, Element.npolku 19 B 26, FIN-33720 Tampere, Finland
-Petr-

Death Bite #5
Lithuania strikes once again with this professionally printed A5 sized magazine with the circulation of unbelievable 3000 copies as the editors say, quite many for an underground magazine of this sort I would say. Everything is printed in black and white on a glossy paper and the lay-out is very creative and a bit too chaotic in some places. Anyway, the interviews included are Forgotten Silence, Skyclad, Endura, etc. and also many reviews are to be found here. I am not sure what the price is, but 4$ should do I guess.
Contact: Laimis Šmergelis, Taikos 71-9, LT-4910 Utena, Lithuania
-Marek-

Don't Burn the Witch #1
An extreme true black metal magazine from Brazil, which praises the original essence of this music and the editors seem to be devoted to what they do. Bands interviewed are for example Zephyrous, Desaster and Melechesh and there is a German scene report included, which is a bit out of date, but still interesting. The magazine comes in A4 format on 32 glossy pages and I think it is worth buying for people with similar musical opinions. Sorry, no pricing details again.
Contact: Flagello Aeternu, Box 647, Cinciuma, SC 88801970, Brazil
-Marek-

Eclipse #2
Eclipse magazine surprised me a bit because it comes from my town and this issue came in English. It seems the era of Czech magazines in English has started finally and they appear as flying mushrooms after rain. Eclipse is strictly focused on the black metal scene only and it brings interviews with famous bands such as Solstafir, Falkenbach, Hatheim and also some Czech underground bands. Reviews are not many, but I guess the next issue may kick. To order this A5 photocopied magazine send 2$.
Contact: Martin Svoboda, Labská 15/5, 625 00 Brno, Czech Republic
-Marek-

Eclipse #3
The blood has not dried yet and here is the follow up to what I have already introduced. This time dealing mostly with the Czech scene, but still as black as spot. I am not very pleased with it though as my musical tastes differ and it's only black metal, you know. I bet damned souls will be flattered to get it.
-Marek-

Fifth Season #3 newsletter
F. S. is a newsletter, published by Robert from Drunk & Disorderly magazine and as this one is a bit old, I only wanted to remind you that the new issue is coming soon. Ask about the latest news.
Contact: Robert, 41 Gerard Road, Harrow, HA1 2NE, England
-Marek-

In Deed Hell #7
The 7th issue of In Deed Hell is rather an exceptional one as it is printed in English and apparently it was made to support the included artists. If you can be bothered, I.D.H. offers you valuable information on the Czech and Slovak scene, besides actual interviews with Bal Sagoth and Will'o'Wisp to name a few. It is full of Dodher's exual horror drawings as usually and it is available for lousy 3$, so you can get yourself a piece of quality pross again... but as I said if you can be bothered, as Crin had it, having a wank will be far more fun and it will save you your money... so decide for yourself.
Contact: Jaromír Bozruc, Chárovská 15, 794 01 Krnov, Czech Republic
-Marek-

Metal Rules #2
A strange publication from the USA has arrived to my mail box lately. To be honest it was my first touch with an American 'zine as I had not read any before. Firstly I would say it is not a common metal 'zine as there are a lot of different interviews, articles and it seems to me that Jeff the editor gives an opportunity to all bands and doesn't care if they play rock or brutal death metal for example an unbelievable interview with Steve Vai and on the contrary with Amon Amarth strange? Isn't it? Anyway there are many reviews included and some funny pictures as well as some rumours and so on. I am a little bit confused but overall I like this untraditional zine.
Contact: Jeff Rappaport, 2116 Sandra Road, Voorhees, NJ 08043, USA
-Petr-

Moondance #4
A year has passed since the third issue that I admired a lot and finally the fourth issue arrived and it offers really incredible in-depth interviews I've ever read. On 74 pages format A4 you can discover Antichrisis, Waylander, Nagelfar, Varathron, Desaster, Usurper, Abigor and many others plus three hundred reviews of demos, CD's, 'zines and books. Moreover you can find out who Ernst Junger was and as well there is included a long philosophical discussion with the Circle of Jormungandr. To make it short this magazine better to say book is an unbelievable effort and I advise to everyone to buy it.
Contact: Timo Kolling, An der Friedenseiche 7, 32457 Porta Westfalica, Germany
-Petr-

Mortal Flames #4
This is the last issue of this Malaysian 'zine and as I was told, Rohaizad, the editor, is now involved in creating a newsletter in Malaysian. But as this issue is still available for 3$ I thought you might be interested. The interviews inside are many and to name a few, I should mention Handful of Hate, Behel and En Garde. There are about 50 reviews included and the lay-out looks nice. Those of you who want to get to know something about the Malaysian scene as well, or just get something exotic, are encouraged to get a copy of this A5 publication.
Contact: Rohaizad, 110 Jalan 17/3, 40200 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia
-Marek-

Oskorei #1
A Norwegian publication, very professional and focused on all kinds of metal music, no matter what the origins are. 52 A4 pages are packed with interviews of all sorts (Mundanus Imperium, Immortal, Demoniac...) and the mag. also is also told to include a free compilation CD in a limited edition, but I was unlucky enough not to get it. I believe the magazine is 7$ and I strongly recommend you to get a copy if you chance to see it somewhere...
Contact: Oskorei magazine, P.O. Box 241, 5260 Indre arna, Norway
-Marek-

Payo #6
Payo is the best Czech written 'zine dealing with extreme music at the moment. Maybe most of you will find this information of no importance, but if any of you happen to play in a band, you would be a fool not to contact them as you can have your demo or whatever you produce honestly reviewed here at least. What is also important is that one of the editors runs his own label called Merot prods., so put a pen into paper...
Contact: Miroslav Ilek, Ukrajinská 15, 625 00 Brno, Czech Republic
-Marek-

Pernicious #6
I was told everybody in America had computers. So how come this is a typewriter designed magazine? Obviously any stunning design cannot be created in such conditions. It includes interviews with more or less unknown bands and people from the death metal territories. A good thing about Pernicious is that it includes advertisement so you can see what's going on and you can also have your own add placed there if you wish.
Contact: Pernicious, 579 Clark PL, Uniondale NY 11553, USA
-Marek-

Shadows of Michelangelo #11
Most of you have surely heard about this American magazine before. Believe it or not, this is their last issue as they say and if it is not some dodgy kind of American humour, I have to say I do not understand why. With their 6000 printed copies they must be the best known magazine dealing with the underworld culture in the world. Just to let you know...
-Marek-

Terra Aegra #1
To tell the truth many Czech and Slovak 'zines have risen in the last months but unfortunately most of them suck. However Terra Aegra astonished me a lot. Honestly the lay out doesn't look professional at all but nevertheless the interviews are done very well and I do appreciate it very much. Incantation, Avenger, Unholy Grave, Pathology Stench and a few other interviews can be found as well as demo and CD reviews. The third issue should behold the light of the world during the winter so don't hesitate and write for more details.
Contact: Honza Fastner, Horní Vltavice 81, 384 91, Czech Republic
-Petr-

What's up #14
Is a newsletter and it comes from Romania. Format A4, 4 pages filled with reviews, news and contacts. If you run a band, 'zine or label send your samples to Adrian and he will surely review that. It's available for 1$.
Contact: c/o Adrian Popescu, Str. Valea Ialomitei, 13, Bl. A32, Sc. B, Ap. 16 Sector 6, 77413 Bucharest, Romania
-Petr-

UNDERGROUND PRESS

Crimson Midwinter

What else can be said about this young Finnish band, whose success has just started with their brand new debut CD... Listen to Jussi, who immediately answered my e-mails.

Finland is very often called as the land of the thousand lakes and woods. Do you feel honoured by this statement? Which lakes, landscapes should not be overlooked when I visit Finland in the Summer or in the Winter?

Well, of course it sounds nice if someone says that Finland is a beautiful place to live or something like that, but it certainly isn't the only truth. There are many towns and cities with busy people and modern environment here as in every other country as well. Anyway, if you long for peace and quiet, you don't need to travel far away, that's a good thing I think. Some of the Finnish forests, lakes and small mountains still look very untouched, though I doubt there is any place left anymore where man wouldn't have walked in, in the Finnish woods I mean. If you want to see really beatiful landscapes and purely innocent nature, I'd suggest you to travel up north, there you can find lots of desolate moors, fresh rapids and beautiful nature in general.

You've started creating your music already in 1994 and the full length CD appeared only this year. Can you very briefly tell what you released before the album and if there are still these items available?

CM released its debut demo "Just another cold wasteland" in March 1995, the 2nd aggression "Us mere mortals" came out in January 1996 and in Summer 1997 we recorded a three-song unofficial reh./demo tape which wasn't spread at all due to the quite bad sounds. In Autumn 1997 Black Mark offered us a deal and the album got released in Spring 1998. CM has also been featured in a couple of compilation cd's namely "Under the pagan moon" (1996), "Encyclopedia Pestilentia" (1997) "Out of the box" (released by Black Mark 1997) and "Black Mark Attack II" (1998). All the songs on compilations have been taken from demo'96.

The cd is finally out at the moment what do you expect from this? Personally I rate it as very limber and aggressive album, which moves Crimson Midwinter to the elite. How would you describe the music to an unfamiliar listener who has never heard about Crimson midwinter?

Of course I'd like to hear positive comments about it (like yours, hah hah!) and if the feedback is partly negative it's ok too. I don't mind that much about it, at least nowadays, since I'm not in the band anymore... (more about this later)

To be honest I really dislike the cover picture of the album which was made by such a great painter Christian Wahlin who is responsible for the covers of Emperor and Tiamat. I hope I will not insult you but really it is non-convincing. Do you agree? Will you cooperate with him in the future?

I don't like the cover artwork that much either... It's an ok picture, but we had a better alternative as well (in my opinion) but due to some shitty dictatorial disagreements we waited for Wahlin's drawing which got delayed and delayed. I had the other artwork already in the end of January, but we had to wait 'til early April for Wahlin's art. And the first time I saw the cover was in Black Mark's internet site... Maybe that explains something...

Turn the topic and tell me how you see the Finnish metal scene which in my opinion has always fallen behind Sweden or Norway even though you've had such fabulous bands like Amorphis or Sentenced. Don't you know why? Which bands at the moment would you recommend to unfamiliar fans?

Fallen behind Sweden and Norway? In which way? I don't see it like that at all! There are many talented, great and original in Finland too, but for some reason they aren't as known as some other bands from Scandinavia. At least those Finnish bands can certainly compete with many foreign bands at the moment, in quality: Nightwish, Children of Bodom, Nattvindens Grat, Furthest Shore, Wizzard, Barathrum, HIM, Horna, Yearning, Medieval Art, Let Me Dream, Morningstar/Perkele, Fall of the Leafe, Impaled Nazarene, Stratovarius (although I dislike them), Black Swan, Nightside, Watch Me Fall, Sunride, Silentium, Midnight Sun, This Empty Flow, Decoryah, Tunrida, Thyrane, Embraze Absurdus + those you already mentioned. The Finnish metal scene is very variable and strong, though there are also crappy copycats which can't do but imitate their idols, but this is the same in every country.

By the way what are your feelings towards Cryhavoc and Children of Bodom? They were not heard and suddenly they have got CD's on Nuclear Blast? I personaly assume it is better to release one or two demos and gain some name in the underground and only then can I afford to release a CD. Do you share this opinion with me?

You didn't probably know that both bands have previously released demos under different names, Cryhavoc was called Preprophecy (also Ravensfall for awhile) and CoB consists mostly of members of Inearthed. Preprophecy released at least 4 demos and Inearthed two, so the guys in Cryhavoc and CoB are certainly not new-comers in the scene. The both bands have released their debut cd's for Spinefarm, and Nuclear Blast has licensed the albums from Spina, as far as I know. CoB are fucking great band, but I don't like Cryhavoc's music that much (Preprophecy was better in my opinion), because they're spreading their name by using phrases like "the new gods of Sentenced-metal" and like that. They're just a bad imitation of the great Sentenced's current style, unfortunately.

How would you face if you had a starting band and a boss for example from Century Media came to you in order to sign a record deal with you. Would you agree to it or would you turn it down?

It would naturally depend on the deal and conditions in it. Now what I have learned being under a somewhat big label (Black Mark), I would be very cautious with the details in the contract. I'd prefer being on a small label but having all rights to do whatever I wish, which hardly happens with bigger labels, partly because they have so many bigger bands to concentrate in and partly because they just don't give a fuck about a new, small band, but just want to make a few bucks by releasing the album (or something like, aarrghh...). To reveal one interesting detail here, I'd like to tell that Black Mark still owes Jari (CM guitarist) something like 7000 FIM (about $1200), because he had to pay the studio costs by himself, since Black Mark didn't send the money then, as they promised (and as was written in the contract, they said they'd pay the studio budget beforehand).

Let's go away from the music and tell me what is your opinion about the racism. Don't you think that people should be sorted as being good or being bad and not persecuted or killed only for they have a different colour?

I totally agree with you. What can I say more?

Another theme is nature. What is your opinion about the global warming. Do you agree that the global warming represents a serious problem for the future of the world?

It's just a symptom of human's stupidity and self-centered view of world. I can't say how serious a problem global warming can become, but if people continue polluting and ravishing the Earth like they do now, I'm sure there won't be many centuries left for our asshole race. Cash-blinded and greedy people are marching towards their perverse extinction...

Return back to your album especially to your lyrics which are very interesting and I don't think you are the kind of person who looks for inspiration in the forest or so. If I am wrong correct me please, but you seem to be inspired by dark imaginations and phantasmagoria. Where do you find inspiration for writing the lyrics?

Phantasmagoria??? Hmmm, I don't see ghosts nor do any kind of spectres appear to me at night. My lyrics come from me, from my mind, from my soul. I write what I feel, think, hate, enjoy, despise, criticize and so on. Yes, you're right, I don't need any outer sources of inspiration such as walking in the woods, listening to something or drinking booze. The ideas just pop up in my mind once in a while and if I have a pen and a piece of paper available, I write these ideas down and sometimes later they can become a part of some lyrics (or not). Everything depends on my moods and what kind of things I'm doing at the very moment the first lines are written. Sometimes the ideas appear when I'm sitting in a bus, driving a bicycle, eating, watching TV or just listening to music. However, I don't consider things like TV or music as sources of inspiration, as said before. I write about things I feel are important to me and about things I think I have something to comment on. My lyrics aren't too happy, because it wouldn't fit to metal music and because I prefer writing more about decay than joy...

You've been into the scene for quite a long time. Do you think it is developing or fading away? Anyway what do these mentioned titles mean to you and are you still listening to their music: Moonspell "Wolfheart", Edge of Sanity "Purgatory Afterglow", Sepultura "Beneath the Remains" and Impaled Nazarene "Ugra Karma"?

Some bands still bring fresh winds to the metal scene, but too many are there just for money, publicity and other non-musical things. If a band will be formed only to spread some kind of stupid propaganda or just to copy other, bigger bands, there's no use to form a band! "Wolfheart" is a fucking great album, nice mix of aggressive feelings and darker atmospheres. "Purgatory afterglow" is one of the best (if not THE best) melodic death metal albums and Dan Swanö is a divine creature, I'll praise his creations forever! "Beneath the remains"... Well, quite cool deathrash album and back in the beginning of 90's I enjoyed it very much, but nowadays it's only "a good, but not so special" album. "Ugra karma" is not that good IN album, although has many great moments and songs, it's somehow too black metallish or...

As far as I know at the moment you have been kicked out from the band. What was the reason for that? I suppose you were at the birth of the band and you have become the main brain of the band answering letters, interviews and so on. Do you think that the rest of the band will be able to continue as you did? What is your aim if you are not in the band? Will you be still in the metal scene or will you leave it in a while?

Here's an explanation about the shitty happenings which I have written for many of my foreign penpals: Well, I didn't leave the band, it would have been one of the last things in my life to do. Jari - the dicktator and overlord, also a guitarist - called me about a week after CM latest gig that he can't stand me anymore, because me and him have so different opinions about many things, mostly not band-related. He told that he has been pissed off every time I've been around, in rehearsals or in studio, for over a year - although I hadn't said or done anything! I was the only person in the band to say something against his opinions and suggestions or suggest any things, so now he doesn't have to worry about "opponents" in the band anymore... The other guys "just play" and don't say yes or no to most of the things. Though Jari called the others before calling me, it wouldn't have changed his mind if someone would have straightly disagreed with his decision. Afterwards I have heard that he searched for another vocalist already back in last Autumn, but he never said anything about that to me, except when we spoke (=argued) for the last time in the middle of July. And he dares to say to me that has and will not do anything behind others back! He had no guts to say that he wanted something to be different in the band or in the relationship between me and him, he just silenced and answered with two-word sentences when I had something to say to him. After a while I stopped saying anything to him, if it wasn't necessary, and tried not to care about his behaviour. I didn't care that much if he couldn't speak to me as long as I could do my job with the band properly and CM's "career" developed somehow all the time. But he was pissed for over a year (at least) and just couldn't let it out, that's what I call really pitiful behaviour. I never tried to change his music - simply because I can't play any instrument - but he demanded me to change one of my lyrics, which became 'Metalglory'. Because of this the lyrics of 'Metalglory' were used by an accident, cause I didn't want to sing the lyrics he made during one evening he was drinking beer with his mates (he calls his friends beer-mates, not friends...). They were called 'Bloodburst' and told about annihilating Vatican, shooting the pope and shit like that. And I wasn't the only one who didn't like those lyrics... In Jari's opinion good metal lyrics should have done with a cheek-in-tongue mentality and must not have any sort of "deeper" meanings between lines. But, on the contrary, he says that he makes his riffs/music very seriously and uses many hours to create good songs. It's much easier to notice if the lyrics aren't made seriously than if the composer has written the music seriously. How can a listener take seriously your songs (musically) if the lyrics are bullshit? Not everyone can play some instrument...Yes, we had disgreements in many cases, but that didn't really bother me as said before, but he couldn't cope with the fact that he couldn't have all the control over CM's creations (at least I think so now afterwards) and couldn't cope with the fact that there's someone who doesn't agree with him, and tells it as well. He told also that he didn't like some of my answers in the interviews during the years, because he doesn't agree with me in some cases and thinks my personal opinions would be generalized as the common opinion in the CM camp. So, what's that "in opinion"- or "I think" -thing in my answers then? Are there so stupid people who would think that if I say I think something about something, it would be the opinion of the other members as well?
Apparently there are... in Jari's opinion. Finally, before I end this preaching, let me write a couple of quotes straight from Jari's mouth (during conversations/arguings between me and him):
"I would start a one-man-band if I just could play the drums."
"Yes, I'm a tyrant and a shithead, but so what?!"
"Don't come to tell me about attitude."
"I don't care about doing some stupid underground interviews."
"I won't play in Turku because there would be so many asshotes in the audience. If I don't get well paid for that."
That's about the explanation... I really can't say what happens in the CM camp in the near future, but I know that Jari is not interested in keeping up contacts in the underground more regularly, not to talk about self-promoting the band. He just wants to make songs... In my opinion that kind of behaviour causes only bad reputation for the band, but what can I do anymore? No, I won't leave the metal scene, because I'm now yelling in two other bands, in a local heavy metal band called Primitive and in a band which I formed with Nightside's drummer and two guys from Watch Me Fall (we play something like death/black metal with aggression, melodies and synths). There are some plans for the future in both band camps, but I can't tell anything for sure yet. With Primitive we're looking for gigs at the moment, because they released a self-financed 7-song cd in Summer (with their previous vocalist) and as we have done 5 new songs as well (with me), we have more than enough songs to choose for a live set. And besides the bands, I'm doing also a webzine called Metal Elite, the first issue will be released within two weeks from now.

I feel I should close this interview, though tell me have you ever been to the Czech republic or in the East Europe? What do you think about my country?

I have never visited your country or other Eastern European countries, unfortunately. I have heard the beer down there is very cheap, so I'd really like to travel there and taste some Czech beer, hah hah! I don't know much about Czech Republic, but it seems that the metal scene there is pretty strong by now, because something like five years ago nobody knew any other bands than Master's Hammer, Root and maybe Törr. I wish good luck to your metal scene and the bands honestly involved in it!

The interview ends and this place is for you...

Look out for Metal Elite webzine, it will be found under www.truemetal.org (don't know the exact address yet and for my bands as well. Support metal, locally and world wide!!!

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interview by Petr

Silent Stream Of Godless Elegy

First of all, please say something to introduce your band in short...

SILENT STREAM OF GODLESS ELEGY is quite young Czech doom-metal band. Except usual rock instruments we use also violin and violoncello, which brings to our music certain "another dimension". In April 1998 Redblack Productions / M.A.B. Records released our second album called "BEHIND THE SHADOWS", which epitomize our conception and our own way of doom-metal.

The metal scene has been recently enriched with your second CD, a very remarkable product indeed. Your style is characterised as string doom metal with roots at the Slavonic folklore, I assume you are the first metal band to have used these influences, at least I have not heard of any yet. Tell us something more about your music and who is responsible for composing...

We play doom in which influences of our culture make themselves felt. The most usual expression of our music is melodic string doom-metal with influences of our folklore, but these influences we don't bring to our songs wittingly - they come from our hearts. Simply it's evident in our music we come from Slavonic part of Europe. Our "music-engine" is Petr (guitar/vocal). He creates most of music ideas and then we all together participate in final looks of the songs. Each member brings the different music style and feelings and that´s way our music is a certain "common harmony of our souls".

This is your fourth product so far (if I counted correctly). And at the same time it is your second CD. Are your previous recordings still available and, what is more important, do you personally think they are worth buying?

Ye, our demos are available by Shindy Productions and first album by Leviathan Recs as-well as by Redblack Prod / M.A.B. Recs. I think it's usual when you are interested in a band you try to take hold every releases the bans has. It's interesting to retrace band's development... Of course we look to our previous releases critically, but it's usual situation I think...

Your first CD "Iron" was released by Leviathan records. As far as I know, this label is not very active concerning promotion. Was that the reason why you have decided to sign to another label, Redblack productions, instead? Do Redblack provide you with better conditions and how have things been going so far?

Leviathan released our debut CD and it was great for us 'cause we were rather young unknown band... We appreciate it forever ! But there was no promotion, no effort to kick us to higher position, you know. So when I discussed conditions with Redblack Productions/M.A.B. Records, I didn't hesitate... Redblack & M.A.B. cooperate with labels all the world over and do promote us as much as possible what's very difficult and expensive for Czech label. We're very satisfied with them !

Let us talk about your new CD for a while. The song "Old Women's Dance" blew my mind when I first heard it. In fact I think it is so strong that it will remain engraved in the monument of metal hymns forever. Unlike the other songs, its text seems to be inspired by the legendary witches' Sabbaths, am I right? Tell me more about it...

Oh, thanks for your gallantry. I like this this song too. But I have to gull you, it's not inspired by Sabbaths. Just we want to temper of lyrics corresponds with temper of songs, you know. This song is wild and dark, so the lyrics are the same. They were created in Petr's mind as they are created all the time in...

The rest of the lyrical side of the album expresses rather feelings of gloominess and doom, they are sometimes even very sad. Do you want to express anything in particular in your lyrics?

Our lyrics are mostly indefinite. As they are very abstract they are multiple-valued, so everyone sees the sense of them very differently... They are related with some moments, with certain states of mind. They come from the temper of the song, from temper of our singer Petr who writes them. As he is very "weird" person, most of the lyrics are weird too - pessimistic, depressive and melancholic.

There are pictures from herbarium used throughout the booklet to decorate its pages, quite a good idea. Why all these plants?

The cover is production of me and Tomas of Redblack. We tried to create a cover that would be very unusual and would be connected with atmosphere of the album. I think it succeeds. I'm very satisfied with it...

As a journalist-like-to-be, I can't help trying to compare your band to other outfits. It seems to be quite uneasy, but yet I have found a guitar melody very similar to the way Opthalamia play their guitars in the song called "Ghost". Do you listen to the band or was it just a coincidence?

To tell the truth none of us knows Opthalamia. But it's interesting for me so I'm going to take hold it. It's just a coincidence, 'cause we compose music of ourselves, not influenced by the others, you know...

In my opinion you have developed from a doom metal act, strongly influenced by the English branch of doom metal. Your present style is very own though. I think the new era has started with the coming of your cello player. Do you agree? Considering the recent development, I think we can talk about an exceptional success. Some people estimate your contemporary production higher compared to your previous production, some on the contrary. How do you feel about your music's development?

Thank you again ! I think "Behind..." makes a big progress compared to "Iron". It's caused by we are "older" once again, we know better what we want to express, what we feel, what want to compose, to create.... It isn't much connected with the coming of new member, but much more with development of each member of Silent Stream... Simply "BEHIND THE SHADOWS" is much more mature, varied, colourful, ... It more describes conception of our own way of doom-metal. We try to new album will continue it.

There were three cover versions of songs by Dead Can Dance and This Mortal Coil used to bring the album to the end. I guess it means you wanted to express your homage to these bands. To be honest I don't listen to them and I do not know their music much either. Do you still listen to the metal scene and do you want to emphasise any of your favourite metal bands here?

Ye, you've guessed it right. It's the homage to them, not the our new music style as someone thinks. Simply we love them and we wanted to express it... Of course except other styles we listen to metal in bigger or smaller measure (consisting of each members) as we have listen to it all the time and all the time we will ! But there are big differences among us in listening of music. For example Petr likes mostly death-metal, my brother heavy and progress, Zuzana things like Dead Can Dance, me doom-metal... To name my favourite bands, I really love Orphanage and Anathema. To play with them is one of my best wishes...

The situation in the Czech metal scene has gone through significant changes. Many CD's are being released and many new bands are appearing. How do you feel about the Czech scene? Is it difficult for a band to gain the attention they deserve? I think the attendance of Czech concerts is quite satisfying in general, what is your opinion? And finally, do you think Czech bands can compete with foreign outfits in terms of the musical quality?

Our scene is raising as the others are, I think. There are many bands they bore me and a small number they interest me. The second set is formed by Dark, Endless, Hypnotic Scenery, Forgotten Silence, Dissolving Of Prodigy, Darkness Dreams and a few of others in my opinion. They are these ones who can compete with foreign outfits. As for attendance, mostly we're satisfied too. It's really fine to play when the heavy stagediving runs...

To round it off I should ask about the news in the band and whether there is any new material being prepared...

As we've played all weekends last four months, there was not too time to compose new songs ('cause we can't meet on workdays as each member lives at different place). We're working on the first new song (and to tell the truth I like it very much). But be sure, we have heads full of thoughts. I think we are able to record our new album in spring or summer '99. Be looking forward it ! As for other news, the first impression of new CD is out, there's a great idea to make the tribute album of Masters Hammer and probably we're going to take the part in it...

Thanks for your patience. Is there any message you would like to share with our readers?

Greetings to all of our fans, we hope you will be majestic as you are at present ! Thank you, Marek, for your support, keep doing this fine forever ! Dive into the Stream, Listen to the Elegy !!!

interview by Marek

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Breath of Night recs, P.O.Box 54, DeKalb, IL 60115-0054, USA
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Epidemie recs, Martin Cech, P.O. Box 5, 396 01 Humpolec, Czech Republic
Goldtrack recs, P.O. Box 37062, 28080 Madrid, Spain (http://www.arrakis.es/~goldtrack)
Hammerheart recs, P.O. Box 277, 6300 AG Valkenburg, Holland (http://www.xs4all.nl/~hhr)
Holy recs, BP 59, 77260 La Ferte S/S Jouarre, France
Last Episode, In der Vorstadt 114, 73529 Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany
M.A.B. recs, P.O. Box 9, 735 03 Karvina 3 Darkov, Czech Republic (http://www.mabrec.cz)
Meret prod, Ukrajinska 15, 625 00 Brno, Czech Republic
Morbid recs, Postfach 3, 03114 Drebkau, Germany
Northern Darkness recs, P.O.Box 51, 10052 Bardonecchia (TO), Italy
Obscene prods, Miroslav Urbanec, Dolany 117, 533 44 p. st. Zdánice, Czech Republic
OZ prods, A.P. 109 Boulevares, 53140, Edo. de Mex., Mexico
Pagan recs, P.O.Box 12, 86 105 Swiece 5, Poland
Polar Bear recs, P.O.Box 2198, 2301 CD Leiden, The Netherlands
Redblack recs, Kopecna 7, 602 00 Brno, Czech Republic
Repulse recs, P.O. Box 50562, 28080, Madrid, Spain (http://www.csnauta.es/repulse)
Supernal Music, 27 Fortis Green, East Finchley, N2 9JL London, England
The End recs, 556 S. Fair Oaks #101-111, Pasadena, CA 91105, USA (http://www.theendrecords.com)
Tomi records, Tom Jilík, Farská 1014, 686 04 Kunovice, Czech Republic
Unknown Territory, P.O. Box 819, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 8TS, England

List of illustrations by A. Mucha, used in this isue:

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We deeply apologise to Willem from the Mouth of Sauron magazine for not including his Belgian report, we did not expect it to be so extensive and in order to recompense to him at least partly, we decided to publish his report on the Internet, so please make sure to find the report on our web page, as it may give you valuable information about the Belgian scene.

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Marek:
1) Anathema
2) Antichrisis
3) Skyclad
4) Septic Flesh
5) Empyrium

Petr:
1) Septic Flesh
2) Anata
3) Empyrium
4) Abigail
5) Silent Stream of Godless Elegy

Labels interested in cooperation are invited to get in touch. Please ask about our reasonably low advertising rates. Distributors, please ask about our interesting wholesale prices. All mail will be answered, but as you have surely noticed, we prefer e-mail.

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Please check our web page, where further information can be found and where topical news about Silence diary should be published.

http://www.mujweb.cz/www/silence

Please send no mail to Petr this time if you want your reply soon, he will be abroad at least until December '98.

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